

the spirit



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Performing Arts Clubs Faced With Declining Membership

BY JESSICA JACOLBE

You enjoy their performances and applaud them for their talents. You see them staying in school late into the night, and then at shows during Common Hour. You may want to hang out with them, but they're too busy at rehearsal. They make it look easy, but behind the scenes, there is a small amount of people working hard to make these performances happen.

This past year, membership in arts and performance clubs has been declining. This decrease in numbers seems unusual, especially with the sudden trend of arts advocacy in public schools. Arts and performance clubs such as Chapel Players, Dance Club, Music Performance, and the Dance Team have not been getting the membership response they would have hoped for. The turn-out at auditions has gone down, compared to previous years.

Chapel Players just finished an incredible run of "Into the Woods." At the beginning of the year, however, only five freshmen auditioned and the rest were juniors and seniors. Not only are few new faces showing up, some old faces have been dropping out. Time formerly dedicated to rehearsal is now used for jobs, unfinished schoolwork, and improving GPAs. For others, a change in priorities and interests caused them to leave the arts clubs. Mallory Arroyo, president of Chapel Players, says, "Students' busy schedules keep them from participating in creative clubs like Chapel Players. I love Chapel Players with all of my heart and have grown from my experience with the club, but it is a demanding commitment."

The Music Performance club does not require auditions and welcomes anyone who can play an instrument and attend practice sessions. Compared to the last few years, the Music Performance club is seeing a slow growth. Another club that doesn't require auditions is the Dance Club. According to its director, Stacey Temple, the club saw its largest participation in the fall of 2011 with sixty members, but this year, it is back to its average of forty. Asked if the Dance Club is affected by a membership decline, Temple says, "It is really hard to predict, and I'm hesitant to say anything is a trend." Forty members is still a large number considering other clubs' membership numbers. Dance Club president Cassandra Guerrier says, "Dance Club has always been welcoming for me. It offers students an outlet for creativity without having to feel as if they're going to be critiqued or judged solely on their skill." Open clubs that do not require auditions seem to be doing well; clubs that require members first to display their skills seem to have suffered more. This year, for example, nobody showed up at the initial round of auditions for the SJC Dance Team.

Anyone who has participated in the arts knows that the only way to be the best is through practice, practice, practice. In school, most students spend their hours socializing and attending events. Part of what makes St. Joseph's College a comforting and enriching experience is student life. College is a time for participating in clubs, particularly if students have a talent they want to develop and display. Mallory adds, "Clubs like the Dance Club, Music Performance, and Chapel Players can help you step out of your comfort zone and meet amazing life-long friends."

Next time you show up in Tuohy Auditorium or any venue for a performance, know that those people work hard and they need your help. Grueling hours of practice or auditions should not be an intimidating factor in joining arts clubs because at the end of the show, it is all paid off. The roar of the audience is the best motivation to continue doing what you love.



The Hispanic Awareness Club Rechristened "Poder Latino"

BY NERISA BETHEL

Change is a good thing. Change is a sign of growth and deeper understanding. This is the precise reason behind the name change of St. Joseph College's Hispanic Awareness Club to Poder Latino, or "LATIN POWER". The club's president, Stephanie Estevez, explains that she learned how limited/limiting the term "Hispanic" is and how much "Latino" is not in a class she took.

As it turns out, the term "Hispanic" only includes people who are of Spanish descent and/or Spanish speaking. Ms. Estevez came to realize how many people of Latin American heritage she might have been turning away.

What people fail to grasp is that "there are many Latin American countries where the native language is indigenous or not Spanish at all." For example, in Mexico, there are some areas where Native American languages are spoken. In Nicaragua, where the club sends funds for children to go to school and get necessary supplies, languages like Garifuna, Miskito, and Sumo are spoken by certain tribes and along particular coasts. That does not make them non-Spanish. Of course, individuals of these heritages are more than welcome to join the club -- whether or not they felt that with the previous name, she does not know.

In addition to the factual and historical information, these term sensitivities are about a people and the liberty they have to call themselves as they please. These terms are about recognizing that being Latin American or Hispanic or Latino/a does not only include "well-known" Spanish speaking countries like Spain or Mexico or Cuba or Puerto Rico or the Dominican Republic.

Being of Spanish descent means embracing every element of the culture, including parts that are not entirely "Hispanic." At the end of the day, every single element -- whether indigenous or non-Spanish speaking -- makes up the Latino culture, all of which must be acknowledged. Acknowledgement begins in places like schools and campuses and that is what Ms. Estevez and her club members are doing. We need to realize the indigenous languages of our Latin-American countries before they completely die out. To be quite frank, Garifuna, Miskito, and Sumo will not be around forever and some are already showing signs of extinction. We need to appreciate them while we have them.

This new name, Poder Latino, is about a holistic appreciation of culture. Stephanie hopes to spark an interest in the topic -- Hispanic or Latino/a. She also hopes to empower people to realize that being Latino is a term for and by the people. Hispanic is more of a form fitting, governmental word and while it is fine too, people should fully comprehend what they are calling themselves and why. All in all, Stephanie wants to invite all kinds of people to her club -- Latino or not. She is excited about the change and is glad she learned what she did.

Editorial: Dangerous Denial

BY DR. HOWARD BRUCE WEINER

Several months ago, I was asked to serve as Moderator to a prospective new club on campus: a College Young Republican Club. Since this was my lifelong political affiliation, it was gratifying to me to see a group of young people who wanted to meet, discuss contemporary issues, the economy, their position in the political future of our country and any other points of interests that arose. Because I spend numerous hours on campus on my teaching days, I felt I could easily devote time and energy to a fledgling organization such as the College Republican Club and help get it on its feet as a new voice on the St. Joseph's campus.

I was, therefore, shocked and appalled that in a vote in the senate on February 11, the charter for the club was disapproved by a vote of 19 against, 15 for and 7 abstentions. Maybe the word shock does not convey exactly what I felt; anger is more like it. I could not help but think, "Upon what grounds did 19 students see fit to vote against chartering such an organization?" There are clubs at St. Joseph's in which Irish, Italians, Muslims, Gays and Lesbians and every other imaginable group find a voice and kinship with others who believe as they do. Are Republicans so feared that they are not entitled to a similar voice? Or are they simply reviled because at the majority of colleges and universities across America, the student (and faculty) population is overwhelmingly Democrat and liberal?

I would be curious to poll the dissenting votes to learn on what it was that they so feared about a College Republican Club. More to the point, I would be interested in learning exactly what they know about the beliefs of Republicans. Is it possible that they have bought into the mainstream media bias and think that all Republicans want to throw granny out into the street, deny children milk and cookies at lunch, arm every citizen with an AR-15 and deport every undocumented immigrant?

And if these 19 naysayers deny that they have any bias -- then wherein lay their objections? Do they believe there is no room for political discourse on a college campus? Good grief -- read a newspaper! See what goes on in this very city vis a vis politics on college campuses. or perhaps they believe that schools like Columbia University (which invited Ahmideenjad of Iran as a guest speaker), or Berkely, or Wisconsin have totally given up on politics. I say to these students, wake up. Use your eyes and ears and see what is happening all across the country before you are so willing to stifle political views which might not necessarily align with your own.

So what's next? If these ten or twenty students choose to meet on a common hour, do they risk disciplinary action because they have not been 'chartered' by the senate? So much for the 1st amendment right to assemble. Before this issue comes up for a vote again (and it will), I urge those students who voted 'Nay' to do some soul-searching and see if they can answer the question, 'Why?'

In the meantime, I will sit back and wonder if a charter for a College Democrat Club would have been similarly rejected.

(Dr. Weiner is a professor in the St. Joseph's College English Department, and a former Editor-in-Chief of THE SPIRIT.)

All ACES

BY JESSICA VILME

America is recognized throughout the world to be the land of opportunities, the greatest of which is access to a high level of education. What happens to the students who come to the United States from Asia, the Caribbean, the Middle East, Europe or Africa, who do not speak English? What is done to help them?

Students who desire to come to the United States to pursue their studies take an exam called TOEFL (Test Of English as a Foreign Language). This test evaluates the student's capacity to read and write in English. St. Joseph's College takes these students into consideration and look beyond their English literacy levels by considering other aspects of the student, including academic history and personality. Alongside the international students, St. Joseph's also takes into consideration students who have been in the country for less than ten years. This is where the St. Joseph's College ACES Program really reaches out to local students whose first language is not English. Students who do not have access to an ESL Program like ACES are forced to learn English on their own and usually end up hating the language; their self-taught method is reflected in the way they write and speak English.

The ACES program, founded in September 2001 by Dr. Sydelle Brooks, has helped recent immigrants struggling with the language barrier and offered them an intensive Freshman English course. This year, the ACES Program is counting its biggest group yet: 28 students divided into 3 groups of 9 to 10 students per group, taught by different professors in courses related to contemporary American culture. The group includes students from Haiti, Dominican Republic, Bangladesh, China, and even Iran and Korea.

The program offers immigrant students private college at an affordable rate thanks to the ACES grant. The grant attracts students from everywhere and helps them become better speakers of English. The majority of those students thought that CUNY would be the best choice for them but the ACES grant made a small private college affordable.

I asked Professor Mik Larson, director of the ACES Program since fall 2009, what his thoughts were about the program and its students. He responded, "ACES students, regardless of the language barrier, are high achievers and really motivated. They value education and want to take advantage of this opportunity. A lot of ACES students have been science, accounting, and business majors, but this year, we are counting for the first time an English major and minor." By the tone of his voice and the smile on his face, it is clear Professor Larson is very happy and proud of the work, perseverance, and determination of his students. Let's not forget to say that two years ago ACES counted among its numbers for the first time the college's valedictorian: Khaing Win, a Biology major from China.

One of the best quality of ACES is the great sense of community; everybody gets along well. There is great interaction between the staff and the students. I became a student at St. Joseph's College in the fall of 2010 after having only been in the country for seven months and obviously needed to work on how to write, read, and speak English. Professor Larson and the tutors at ACES helped and are still helping me a lot. Today, I love reading and writing English; I still have some work to do when it comes to speaking English but I've come a long way since Freshman year and I owe it all to ACES.

Smoke & Mirrors: The U.S. Unemployment Rate

BY BRYAN LOGAN

The unemployment roller coaster seems to be on the same track the economy has been riding for over four years now. While it continues its ride into 2013, the same question has been asked by every nauseated passenger: when is the ride going to be over?

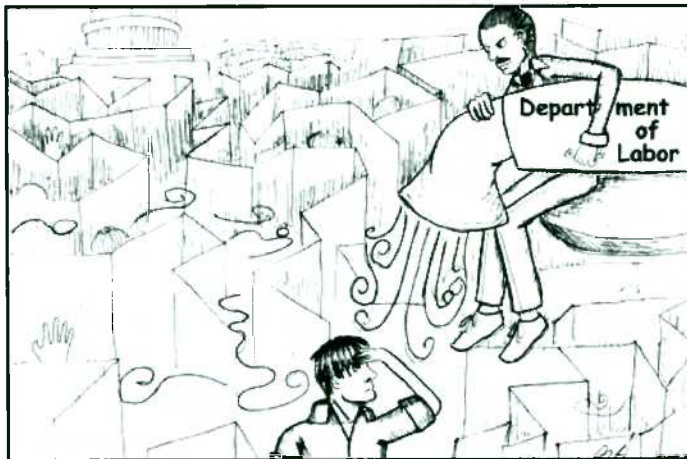
According to some statistics, we are currently under 8% unemployment. Unfortunately for those of us who happen to see that light at the end of the tunnel, it may just be a manmade mirage.

Something that should be asked more often is, how does the unemployment rate get assembled? The Bureau of Labor and Statistics (BLS) surveys 141,000 businesses and government agencies. If they confirm they have added jobs, the unemployment rate will move toward zero by a very small percentage. Then, it would only make sense for the unemployment rate to get higher if there are more people fired rather than hired.

However, the unemployment rate fails to take into consideration those who "drop out of the working force," which happens if the person does not look for a job for four weeks. This could be people who are discouraged due to the current job market, those who have decided to go back to school, or even those who had to take

care of children of elderly family. Either way the BLS does not see these people as part of the workforce.

Also, economic downturn brings unwanted part-time jobs, as people begin to settle for whatever they can find. According to the BLS, there are currently 7,918,000 people who are part-time for "economic reasons." If



Cartoon by Gianna Fralonardo

we take these workers as well as the "discouraged" ones into account when adding up the number of unemployed, there are currently 22,738,000 people in the United States unemployed. That number leaves us with a 14.6% unemployment rate.

The higher rate can easily be argued as 7.9 million of those counted as unemployed are actually working. However, as college students are about to graduate this spring and enter the job search, being forced to work part time due to economic purposes may not be enough to pay back the student loans that will come in the mail on graduation day. For those who are being forced to work part time, underemployment is simply the other side of the same unemployment coin.

On the Bible: Dr. West's Concern

BY NERISA BETHEL Before President Obama's Inaugural speech, C-SPAN held a conference with several politically oriented figures regarding his second term, hypothesizing the changes that Americans will face with our President's new decisions and executions. What particularly interested me was what Cornel West, an American philosopher and activist who is also a prominent member of the Democratic Socialists of America, commented on regarding Martin Luther King Jr. Now, one might ask, what does Obama's Inaugural speech have anything to do with our brother King? Interestingly, Obama swore his oath using Martin Luther King's Bible, a decision of Obama's that Dr. West understood as extremely insulting.

Essentially, Dr. West interpreted Obama's decision as offensive, alluding to Obama's foreign policy as being contrary to the teachings and principles of Martin Luther King. "[Martin Luther King] died," Dr. West notes, "on the three crimes against humanity he was wrestling with: Jim Crow, Carpet Bombing in Vietnam, and poverty of all colors." But now, Dr. West questioned, what would Martin Luther King say about the contemporary Jim Crow laws, our capitalist nation that puts dealers of soft drugs in jail, but not the real criminals of Wall Street; what would Martin Luther King say about the drones being dropped on the civilians of Pakistan, Somalia, and Yemen (war crimes just like the crimes of Vietnam)?

Ultimately, Dr. West suggested that there isn't anything wrong with Obama having had placed his hand on a Bible, "even though the Bible talks about justice," but Dr. West said that the initial problem is that he used Dr. King's Bible, which he took as an offense against the rich tradition stemming from Martin Luther King Jr.'s prophetic voice and values.

Guns Under Fire

By Grace Chamoun

"A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed." - The United States Bill of Rights, 2nd amendment (1789)

Let's take a look back on history. Centuries ago, the United States congress was not arguing about more military spending. Why? Because we didn't have a military. Centuries ago, when someone was in danger, they did not call 911. Why? Because we didn't have established police departments. Centuries ago, when someone screamed, we did not wait to hear sirens. Why? Because we would simply grab our rifles and investigate the commotion ourselves. Centuries ago, when foreign/domestic threats surfaced, we did not wait for our commander-in-chief. Why? Because our small militias diffused the situations instead.

With no system of law enforcement during the time of our Constitution's birth, the citizens of our country had to depend on vigilantism (taking law enforcement into one's own hands) in order to ensure the protection of themselves and their neighbors. Understandably, assault weapons were an essential means of survival in the 1700's. However, for those who haven't seen a calendar in the past few years, it's currently 2013, a day and age where our country has approximately 18,000 law enforcement agencies, 1.1 million law enforcement officials, and the world's best military.

So why then do we still have average civilians such as Nancy Lanza openly displaying their Bushmaster AR-15 rifle and two handguns: a Glock 10mm and a Sig Sauer 9mm? Why are people like James Holmes legally purchasing \$15,000 worth of assault rifles, ammunition, combat vests, etc., with no regulation? Why are semiautomatic variations of our military's M-16 rifle, a pump-action 12-gauge shotgun and .40-caliber semiautomatic pistol (all owned by the Aurora shooter) the most popular weapons in our country's firearm market?

In case you did not catch on, those were all rhetorical questions because quite frankly, I have no answer. We live in a world where an ID must be presented to buy Mucinex and NyQuil, but not for weapons to kill. This country needs gun control. To think that any human being can be approved for a gun license in just 60 minutes is scary, but to know that they can limitlessly purchase sniper rifles and Uzis is just horrifying.

Weapons are getting into the wrong hands and it is the United States government's responsibility to ensure that no longer happens. There is no reason for average civilians to be armed with the same weapons as our soldiers and there is no reason that our government cannot regulate the sale of artillery. If a Middle Easterner travels to their home country multiple times a year, the government starts recording their phone calls and reading their emails, but when a person spends \$15,000 fortifying their weaponry in just a couple of months, it goes unnoticed. This is a serious issue in our country and it's time the NRA and everyone else begins to acknowledge it.

Guns Save Lives

By Robert Jurman

In the wake of the terrible tragedy at Sandy Hook Elementary in Connecticut, many are calling for strict gun control measures which will prevent Americans from having the ability to defend themselves and their families properly. The leftists who are trying to eliminate guns and regulate them further do not understand the purpose of the 2nd Amendment and they do not understand the mentality of criminals, the resourcefulness of criminals, or the capabilities of certain gun types.

The 2nd Amendment reads: "A well-regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed." Our founding fathers understood that firearms were "necessary of a free state". Now, fair enough: the likelihood of a tyrannical government takeover at this point in time is very low, but in case it does happen, the citizens of America have the right to defend themselves and many of us would rather die defending ourselves than to "...lie down on the ground and crawl like a snake..." (John Adams). If the military or police can have a weapon to use against us then law-abiding citizens without criminal backgrounds should be able to buy it.

Furthermore, nothing in the 2nd Amendment states anything about what kind of guns you can buy. The founders had their versions of shotguns and machine guns, except then they were cannons and huge blunderbusses; you could even have cannons on your own sailing ship back then. Also, the founders went through their own gun tragedies. Look at Shay's Rebellion, when a farmer in Massachusetts led a rebellion against America with all kinds of weapons. There was no talk of "gun control" afterwards; the government acknowledged that gun ownership was his right.

Earlier this winter, a woman in Georgia was home with her children while her husband was not home when she heard a home invader trying to knock down her door. She grabbed her .38 revolver and hid with her kids in her bedroom closet. The man broke into her house, opened the closet door, and moved to attack her. She shot him. Five rounds in his head and neck, one round missed. The man got up, ran outside, got in his car and drove off. Luckily, he was so hurt that he crashed and police arrested him. Police said the woman did everything correctly to save her family. Now, should we prevent that woman from having her gun?

But she only had six rounds and a revolver. Some think that one shot from a revolver will stop an invader. This one took five and he still had strength to move. If there were two invaders or if she missed one more she could've been killed with her kids. You need more than five shots and you need semi-automatics and clips to further defend your home.

No matter what, criminals will get guns with multiple clips. They will also get semi-automatics and automatics. We need law abiding citizens to get a background check, get trained and have the same level of weaponry that criminals have to defend the threat of an illegal weapon holder. The truth is, gun control kills and citizens who own guns, and have been trained, background checked and are sane save lives. All the gun crime in this nation is caused by illegal gun owners, and gun control does not prevent them from getting illegal guns.

Arts & Entertainment

Book Review: The Good Fairies of New York

BY THOMAS RUSHIN

Like many great novels, "The Good Fairies of New York" by Martin Millar begins when two thistle fairies vomit all over the carpet of the worst violin player in New York. Wait, what? Most great novels don't begin like that? Oh, Well. They totally should, and maybe then they could hold a candle to the irreverent fun of "The Good Fairies of New York" (from this point forward shortened to TGFONY; just go with it).

So what was I saying again? I'm sorry, but this review- like the book itself- is being written with a vague stream-of-consciousness rippling through the prose. Oh, yes!

The story begins with two wannabe punk rock star thistle fairies Heather

that is inexplicably tied to Dinnie, Heather and Moragg.

For example, Kerry lives across the street from Dinnie and eventually befriends Moragg. Together, they search New York for the flowers needed for her Flower Alphabet so she can win the Community Arts Association Prize and get revenge on Cal, her ex who also is participating in the same contest.

Magenta the bag lady comes into the story drunk, under the impression that she is the ancient general Xenophon. Eventually she gets ahold of one of Kerry's most prized flowers, and continues drifting through the city with it. The other fairies were originally partying with Heather and Moragg before they all were mysteriously transported from Cornwall (in England) to New York. Among them are two Royal fairies on the run from their father.

Now it's BUY, BORROW, OR BUNT time!

Are you the type of person that likes a multi layered story with a diverse array of characters? Are you the type of person that doesn't mind scenes that jump from character to character like a TV show? Then TGFONY is the book for you. The

prose has a fey-like quality to it that is honest and blunt, yet oblivious to your concerns of what and how a story like this should be told. If you don't mind any of that then this book is totally a BUY! It's what I did, and I don't regret it.

Or you guys can borrow it from me if you can't find it in your nearest Barnes & Noble.

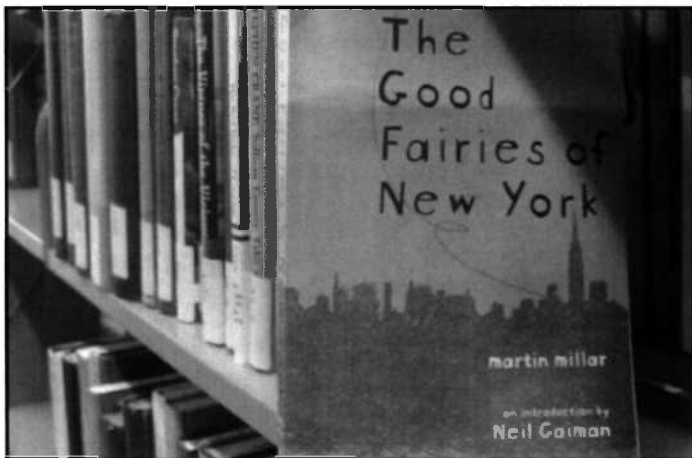
Viral, or Just a Virus?

BY GRACE CHAMOUN

"Fifteen seconds of fame" is a term we are all familiar with in this day and age thanks to social networking and viral videos. Not a day can pass without some new video collecting chatter thanks to YouTube, FaceBook shares, and the good ol' "Bro, did you see this?!" Whether it is songs like Gangnam Style, or bus drivers upper cutting women, these viral videos are changing lives and the Internet as we know it.

Now please don't mistake my opinion. I'm not discussing the small percentage of viral videos that actually have meaning. Momentarily, my interest lies among those videos being watched all over the country and world for nothing more than absurdity. Contemporarily, entertainment has gone from family gatherings to videos of girls eating their used *ahem* feminine products. I intend not to be vulgar, but this is the reality of viral videos: they are ridiculous. People are gaining fame by doing the unthinkable and we as viewers are supporting it.

These videos are proliferating with notoriety and are giving people an incentive to do negative things in order to garner their fifteen seconds of fame. Though we may not support their actions per se, we are supporting their stupidity by watching their posts. Is there anything that we can do to prevent this increase in idiocy? Personally, I will not watch any videos that contain actions I do not condone. But for the rest of the four million viewers that enjoyed watching a man punch a woman in the face, are you making that action acceptable? Just a little something to think about the next time you watch a viral video: be cautious of what you support.



MacKintosh and Moragg MacPherson vomiting on the carpet of the worst violin player in New York, Dinnie Mackintosh. From there the story flits to check on other important characters such as Kerry, the quixotic artist with Crohn's Disease, or Magenta the drunken bag lady, or the other fairies. Each has their own individual adventure

Microsoft's SmartGlass

By Bruno Merisier

Recently, Microsoft developed new software that allows users to connect their devices to their Xbox 360. However, using this software may not be the smartest idea.

At first, the SmartGlass sounded as though it was a new device developed by Microsoft, but it turns out that it is just an application (app) that you can purchase on your handheld device. What this 35.4 MB piece of software does is allow for users to take handheld devices such as the iPhone 4 and make them function as though they were a remote control. Basically, SmartGlass makes devices serve as a keyboard for the Xbox 360 and allows the user to surf the Internet. However, it is unusual for a person to use internet browsing on their Xbox 360 when he or she can just use their phone or computer. In some cases, a person without an Internet connection on their phone can use this software to access the Internet through their paid Xbox Live membership. But ironically, some users report that their device cannot connect to their Xbox 360 without a 3G connection on their phone. Additionally, there are games that interact with this program, but they are only a few in number (such as "Halo 4" and "Forza Horizon"). But just as mentioned before, people would more likely play their games with a standard Xbox controller than use an Android phone.

Initially, the Xbox 360 SmartGlass was only compatible with Windows 8 devices. But over time, usage was extended to devices such as the Android and the iPhone 4 and 5. This can be seen as a benefit since this App is free. But its functions are only useful, at best, when a person is bored. The app allows users to watch a movie on their device and then transfer it to their screen while their Xbox 360 is running. A neat trick, though it seems this would be a waste of valuable time and battery life for a person's device.

To get an accurate account of the SmartGlass's usability, I obtained the app using my iPhone. At first I had trouble signing in, but when I was eventually able to do so everything seemed to work fine. In fact, I would say that this app performed well for what it was made to do. The functions were idiot proof, and the layout was exquisite. On the downside, my battery life depleted very quickly. So after that entire trial, the app itself did not seem worth it.

Overall, this app functions very well, but the SmartGlass idea will likely fade away because people are comfortable using their Xbox360 to actually play games and using their phones or computer to use the Internet. It is interesting to see how technology is now being integrated; however, this may be a sign that Microsoft is running low on ideas that will actually enhance X-Box gameplay.

The Rover and The Quadcopter

By Bruno Merisier

Brookstone, a technology and gadget store, has released one of its latest gadgets called the Rover. Basically, the Rover is a small remote controlled vehicle that has a camera installed. This is not the first time this feature has appeared on a toy. However, what makes this toy revolutionary is that it can be controlled with an App on the iPhone, iPad, and iPod Touch. The free App can be found in Apple's App store and is used as the program to control the car.

In order to conduct a more detailed review of this product, I made a trip to the Brookstone store myself. What initially caught my eye was the advertisement of the App controlled vehicle. I walked into the store and was surrounded by a gamut of App controlled devices. A store clerk informed me that the Rover is indeed App controlled. He continued by asking if I had an iPhone. Since I did have one, he was willing to show me the Rover's features. At first, it took awhile to get a 3G signal to get to the App store, but eventually I was able to download the App.

After setting up the Wi-Fi settings to one of the store's on-display Rovers, I opened the App and saw that the Rover had a caterpillar track wheel alignment (the type of movement where a vehicle rolls one side of its wheels to move in the opposite direction). I immediately discovered the most interesting part of the Rover: the Rover's camera is continuously in use. What this means is that through the iPhone, iPad, or iPod Touch, a person can view the streamed video that the Rover produces and use that as a guide to where they want to move it. So basically, I can use this Rover to move to another room without actually being in that room and record videos of what the Rover "sees".

The aforementioned features of the Rover shadow those of the remote controlled car that was featured in the movie "Fast Five". In that movie, a person uses the remote controlled car to access and view areas in places the controller cannot physically be in, the same as the Rover does in real-life. The Brookstone store allowed for people of all ages to obtain innovative gadgets to visually access places people cannot. For example, another Brookstone product is the Quadcopter. This vehicle has the ability to fly with its four propellers, and it streams videos and pictures to another App-based controller.

The consumer innovations of Brookstone let ordinary people gain access to technology that seems exclusive property of the movies or the military. This type of technology may even foreshadow a future use of the Rover, where a person may remotely control a large vehicle for transportation. These features and predictions may seem frivolous now, but the point made is that this technology opens a whole new world of ideas for the way people carry out their normal lives.

Home Vinter: Pure Wine

BY ROBERT JURMAN

Let's get something out of the way: wines you see on restaurant menus and in liquor stores are all terrible. Guaranteed every single glass of wine you have ever had was made in a mass producing process with no soul. The problem with wine is that it has become a commodity

through which winemakers take advantage of their customers. "Vineyards" don't tell you that they actually re-use grapes after the first batch of wine is made. The re-used grapes give the wine a flat, vinegar-like flavor. They also remove the grapes from their own liquids and use water solutions pumped up with enzymes and pH solutions to ferment the wine (if it can be called that anymore). The end

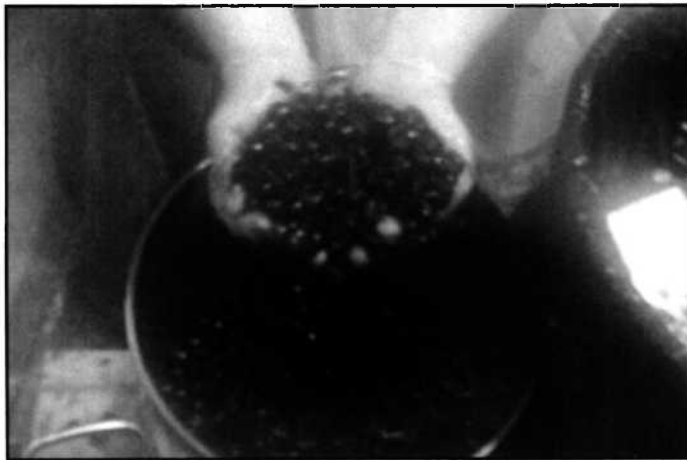
product is your typical bitter, acidic, nasty, tasteless bottle of a chemistry solution called wine. You won't understand exactly what I'm saying until you actually go home, get dirty, and put some love and care into a nice homemade batch of pure wine.

My grandfather has been making wine for years and years, back since when my dad was my age. He has mastered his craft and his wine is some of the best you'll ever taste. After years of watching and learning from my grandfather, this fall I started my first batch of my very own wine. First, I visited a grape distributor. Being among all those grapes and tasting them one by one, you start your journey. I chose Merlot grapes along with Alicante grapes for the base of my flavor. I then chose seedless white grapes and the Italian Muscat grape for some sweetness and for overall body. For about 15 gallons of wine, I spent around \$200 dollars. Now, there are people who just buy juices of the grapes and not the whole grape; however, with that you are getting chemicals and artificial flavoring, and you aren't getting the entire grape to flavor your wine.

At my grandparent's house (they have the

fermenting container and grinder and every other tool needed for wine making) I started to separate my grapes from the stems and crushed them into juice. The problem with big wine makers is that they leave stems on which gives wine a lot of bitter flavor and an unpleasant aftertaste. Picking those grapes off the vine and actually juicing them myself was a marvelous experience.

Once they were juiced and in the fermenting container, it was time to let the grape work and



The purer the grapes, the better the wine.

develop yeast and alcohol. Large wine makers take the grape bits out of the wine and start adding water, sugar and enzymes, which leads to a terrible product. I leave my grapes and all of their juices in, giving it a true full-flavored, pure chance to become actual wine.

After five days of the wine "cooking" (no heat involved; it's just called that) it's time to filter the wine for the first time and put it into huge glass carboy jugs and put a cork in it. After a month you filter it again, and in another month you put it through another filtration to make the wine as clear as possible. You can filter as much as you want; the more filtrations the clearer the wine. Two to three filtrations is recommended. After you are done with the filtrations, bottle the wine in glass bottles and put corks in tightly. To seal the bottles, put some wax around the neck to keep the air out and preserve the wine.

Your wonderful grape elixir is now ready to enjoy. Once you make your own pure wine, you will never, ever fully enjoy a glass of shelf wine ever again. Remember, every other wine is a chemical, but your homemade wine is juiced.

Restaurant Review: OLEA

BY CHRISTA SULLIVAN Looking for something different this month, I opted to try a restaurant nearby serving Mediterranean tapas. I found Olea by accident, having parked on the same block and walked past it on my way to Cornerstone for brunch last semester. I noticed a long line outside waiting for brunch and decided that I would see what the wait was all about. It took me a while to pick a day to go, but I'm glad that I finally did because I was pleasantly surprised.

On the corner of Lafayette Avenue and Adelphi Street, just a few blocks from campus, sits this unpretentious brick restaurant with large windows perfect for people-watching. The inside is cozy: small candles on every table, window seats lined with pillows and cushions, and a friendly, attentive staff. My boyfriend and I happened to go there during Happy Hour and they had a large selection of \$3-6 tapas, not to mention half price beers and wines by the glass. Neither of us was complaining. After looking at the list of available tapas, we decided on a half-dozen oysters (for \$9 instead of their usual \$14) and a whipped spicy feta dip and hummus both of which came with whole wheat pita bread. Since we were already in the Happy Hour spirit I picked out a glass of wine from Italy and he had a German beer.

The oysters came out first and we finished those before our next tapas arrived; they were fresh without being overly briny. Following those came the dips- the pita bread came out warm, our waiter poured a generous drizzle of olive oil over the creamy hummus (he then left the bottle on the table for any additional pours), and the spicy feta was light and airy with a kick from the crushed red pepper. We managed to finish both dips with ease and by that point the restaurant had their full dinner menu in service so we figured a couple extra dishes wouldn't hurt us. So with that we ordered falafel- crusted artichoke hearts and lentil salad. I love falafels so when the artichoke hearts came out, I was excited since I've never heard of anyone using falafel as a coating before. The lentil salad was good, but something I probably wouldn't order again just because it was more of a mixed green salad with lentils which neither of us found to be anything we couldn't make ourselves at home, but the salad did include tiny falafels so those were very good.

Fortunately for us our waiter made a mistake when placing the order and we received a free tapas: bacon wrapped dates stuffed with cheese. They had a creamy, sweet/salty combo flavor (sweet from the ripe dates, salty from the crispy bacon and creamy from the cheese in the center). Though we didn't order them ourselves, they were the perfect end to our meal. Overall I would say it's definitely a restaurant worth checking out, especially if you happen to drop in during Happy Hour.



Winter Break in Istanbul

BY GABRIELLE HUGHES

For most college students, traditional winter break destinations include warm vacation spots, snow-filled ski resorts, or trips home to see family; traveling halfway across the world to a transcontinental mecca of diversity isn't exactly the first thing to come to mind.

After a month of working 40 hours a week, I spent my last week of winter vacation in Istanbul. As the largest metropolitan area in Turkey, Istanbul straddles the Bosphorus River, placing the city in both Europe and Asia. Istanbul is known for its eclectic culture, and with a skyline of mosques, palaces, and skyscrapers, it encompasses attributes of both ancient and modern worlds.

While staying in the city, my two friends and I bunked in a hostel in the neighborhood of Sultanahmet. Considered to be Istanbul's most historic region, Sultanahmet is home to several of the city's attraction points, such as the Hagia Sophia, Blue Mosque, Basilica Cistern, and Topkapi Palace. Each venue was within walking distance of where we were staying, allowing us to visit Istanbul's most

well-known sites within our first few days of travel.

As we explored the city, we were fascinated by its composition and overall ambiance. While the cobblestone streets and winding passageways resemble residential areas of western Europe, mosques are diffused across the city, and are complemented by the radiating voice of the muezzin, which is broadcasted five times a day; Istanbul is clearly Europe's gateway to the Islamic world. Being a fair-skinned young female, my adventures around Istanbul were particularly interesting. Turkish men are very forward with their remarks, and many would go out of their way to get my attention. My friends and I were constantly referred to as "Charlie's Angels" or "The Spice Girls," and by the end of the week, several of the men working in Sultanahmet knew us by name. Visiting the mosques was also uncustomary, in that women are not allowed to expose their hair, shoulders, or legs upon entering. We frequented dozens of the city's mosques, and before going inside, all of us had to ensure that our garments were in compliance with the dress code.



My favorite activity in Istanbul was shopping at the Grand Bazaar, a covered market known for its collection of jewelry, fabric, furniture, and various memorabilia. During the course of six days my friends and I went four times, and in its labyrinthine set-up we found something new every time. Other highlights from my trip include our crazy cab rides through the city's undulating streets, viewing Istanbul in its entirety from the top of the Galata Tower, and sampling Turkey's traditional apple tea at different neighborhood cafes.

Gaining international prevalence by the day, Istanbul is placing bids for the 2020 Olympics, and if you saw "Argo," "Skyfall", or "Taken 2" this fall, you can certainly gather a sense of what the city is like. Traveling to Istanbul undoubtedly increased my confidence as a tourist, and I encourage everyone to immerse themselves in environments of unfamiliarity.

Brooklyn Sports

Cut Diamonds

BY
ANTOINETTE CAMMARANO

The SJC Diamonds bring their sparkle and pizzazz to every event they perform at; however, their flame grew dim this year as their dreams of attending the Universal Dance Association College Cheer & Dance National Championship faded away.

"Spirit Night," the Diamonds largest fundraiser, was cancelled following Superstorm Sandy. This fundraiser was slated to occur on

Friday, November 16, 2012, but was deemed impractical. Amidst all the destruction which resulted from Hurricane Sandy, raising money to send the Diamonds to Nationals seemed superfluous.

In the 2011-2012 school year, "Spirit Night" was the Diamonds largest fundraiser; the money raised at this event was enough to send the Diamonds to Nationals in Walt Disney World. The 2013 UDA Nationals were also held early February in Disney World, but the Diamonds were unable to return to the happiest place on Earth. Lauren Fuchs, a senior at SJC who is a member of the Dance Team, stated "All fundraising had to be stopped due to Hurricane Sandy."

Throughout the weeks following Hurricane Sandy, leading up to

Thanksgiving Break, St. Joseph's College held multiple fundraisers and supply drives to bring relief to SJC students who were heavily affected by the storm. Although this was an extremely worthy cause, and SJC should be compassionate toward its students, should clubs and organizations have found themselves left out in the cold



The Diamonds strike a pose at last year's UDA National Championships.

as a consequence? Should Hurricane Sandy relief have prevented the Diamonds from attending Nationals? Why was there no other way to send the team off to the competition?

The Diamonds are considered a "club team," and therefore do not have an enormous budget to work with in the first place. The budget was enough to send them to the dance camp held by the United Dance Association (UDA) in August. The team paid out of pocket for the hired choreographer to create their dances for Nationals. Paying out of pocket to attend Nationals would be nearly impossible, however.

By having to postpone their fundraiser, the Diamonds ended up having to postpone their hopes of attending Nationals until next year.

Lady Bears Softball: Game On

BY
ANTOINETTE CAMMARANO

Once referred to as the "winningest team in St. Joseph's College athletics history," the SJC Lady Bears softball team starts their season on March 14th in Fort Myers, Florida, concluding their weeklong training camp in the Sunshine State. Following their 7th place finish at the USCAA National Championship last May in Ohio and their NCAA Division III final record of 27-12, the Lady Bears are eager to get back on the field.

The seniors on this season's Lady Bears team are Danielle Marino, Mabel Vargas, Millicia Malvasio, and Andrea Sideli, a second baseman, pitcher, shortstop, and first baseman, respectively. Each player ended their junior year with phenomenal statistics and promise an exciting season ahead.

Morgan Summers, a freshman new to the Lady Bears softball team, claims she's "really excited to be on the team," adding further to that comment by stating "it's the first time that I've actually felt like [I've been on] a real team."

Practices for this season's team began President's Day weekend, and the Lady Bears are preparing to come out strong during their Florida debut. "We seem strong," claims Summers, "We've been having a lot of intense cardio workouts that kick your a**."

Between the intense training sessions, and coming off their superb finish last season, this season's team seems to be a promising one. As the weather gets warmer and the days get longer soon it will finally be time to play ball.

Brooklyn Sports

Getting a Complex: A Long-Awaited New Sports Facility Underway in Brooklyn

BY ANNA CARBONE

The Barclays Center is not the only multi-purpose complex gracing the rejuvenated historic Downtown Brooklyn! As of last year, after a lengthy process that began in 2004, St. Joseph's College Brooklyn officially joined the NCAA. With that, the school developed a larger sports program; however, the facility that the athletes are currently working with is insufficient for proper training. Athletic director Frank Carbone feels that with a new facility "we can finally provide a state-of-the-art athletic complex that is on par with other collegiate institutions in the NYC area, which can only serve to strengthen our teams to better prepare them for the demands of NCAA competition." That is why a new multi-purpose and athletic facility is in the process of being built on Vanderbilt Avenue between Willoughby and Dekalb on the site where the parking lots once were located. Its construction was started on May 22, 2012 and should be completed by the end of 2013.

The gym in Touhy Hall is the current practice venue for a number of St. Joseph's Bears athletic teams, most notably the basketball and volleyball teams. It's a very antiquated gymnasium that has beams running across the low ceilings. It's a tight space for the players to practice, and it would be almost impossible to hold games there. Thus, the gym - which has been in use by the college since 1950 - is nowhere near NCAA regulation size, which has prompted SJC to hold games at nearby Brooklyn Technical High School. The use of Brooklyn Tech's gymnasium is not very appealing because it's a high school facility that it is inconvenient for St.

Joseph's teams and fans to access.

With the addition of the new building, St. Joe's won't have to worry about these issues. For student-athletes such as standout basketball player Michael Megafu, it would be a relief that the Bears would finally have a home court for teams to play and train. The new facility being built is a multi-million dollar project that is being paid for by a bond borrowed from the state and will be paid back over time, but it will be well worth the investment. The facility will be home to basketball and volleyball teams. There will be one main NCAA regulation size court built with the flexibility to be converted into two smaller courts, so simultaneous practices can be held and tournaments can also be hosted. "I'm excited that there will be more space for us to practice and improve our level of play. And now fans can more conveniently come to games," says Megan Moran, a volleyball, basketball, and softball player.

Baseball and softball teams would also be able to practice hitting in the facility as it will feature a batting cage that drops down from the ceiling. When asked about other additions like a swimming pool or racquetball courts, Carbone says, "At the moment these aren't realistic options, although it would be great to consider any and all future opportunities for expansion down the road as our programs continue to grow and develop." There will be team, faculty, and student locker rooms, an athletic training room and even new equipment for the fitness center. Swimmer and softball player Morgan Summers is "excited for these type of amenities, so athletes can have a more comfortable

opportunity to train and receive proper injury treatments."

These may seem like things that will only benefit the 170 student-athletes, but that's not really the case. Because of the newly acquired space, Carbone says fitness classes such as Zumba, yoga, and cardio-kickboxing will also be an option for everyone to enjoy. There will be ample locker rooms, a multi-purpose room, an outdoor walkway along the third floor, and a dance studio. Also, all commuting students who drive to school know that parking isn't the most pleasant part of the day. Well, the new facility's lower-level will provide for about 80 much-anticipated parking spaces, and there will be a valet system established with fees charged on a per semester basis.

It is understandable that due to size and location of the school, St. Joseph's College Brooklyn doesn't have huge athletic facilities, such as tennis courts, a swimming pool, an indoor track or baseball or soccer fields. Keep in mind that SJC Patchogue is able to accommodate these facilities because of their suburban location. "Patchogue has a huge sports facility...it's about time the Brooklyn campus stepped up their game!" jokes baseball and soccer player Vinny Rossi. The new facility, with an expected completion date in late 2013 or early 2014, will showcase more talent from the athletes and provide a "real home" for them, in addition to helping exhibit true Bears pride. To borrow a line from Dorothy in the Wizard of Oz, "There's no place like Home!" Next year Brooklyn Athletics will finally be able to make that claim!



Construction on the SJC Brooklyn gym is well underway on Vanderbilt Avenue.

the spirit

Isles Set to Relocate to BK

BY ANTOINETTE CAMMARANO

The Islanders, New York's lesser known hockey team, has skated their way into a 25 year lease with the Barclay's Center. The Barclay's Center, not too far from our very own St. Joseph's College, will be the new home of the Islanders. Their former home, Nassau Veterans Memorial Coliseum, will be saying farewell after 40 years of partnership.

Brooklyn is now the home of two major league sports teams: the (newly renamed) Brooklyn Nets, a professional basketball team, and the Islanders. It has certainly created a ton of excitement over the potential of seeing "Brooklyn" teams play in a "Brooklyn" arena.

Thomas Agostino, a senior at SJC



who's an avid hockey fan, has been mulling over his thoughts about the Islanders coming to Brooklyn. He has stated "I feel a little torn because I am a big [New York] Rangers fan. I have always loved the Rangers. However, I think it is a great opportunity and a new beginning for the Islanders. Finally Brooklyn will be able to see how great

a live action sport like hockey is."

In the 1940s, Brooklyn was the home of the Brooklyn Americans, a National Hockey League (NHL) team; however, despite their name, the Brooklyn Americans played their games out of Madison Square Garden. Brooklyn does have two ice rinks: one located at the Aviator Sports Complex in Floyd Bennett Field, and one located in Coney Island at the Abe Stark Rink. The Barclay's Center is Brooklyn's only major league sports venue, however.

According to Agostino, "You kind of feel like it is your duty to support them and root for them, being that they will be representing Brooklyn. You don't want a team from Brooklyn to fail because it's our home." Many local Rangers fans could even switch their allegiance to the Islanders simply because they are from Brooklyn.

Although the excitement surrounding the future of the Islanders is infectious, hockey fans were left out in the cold with a long hold out on a new collective bargaining agreement between the NHL's commissioner, Gary Bettman, and the National Hockey

League Players Association (NHLPA). The hold out led to the current strike-shortened season, and is something the NHL will want to ensure they do not repeat if they don't want to drive away more fans in the future, and leave the Barclay's Center half-empty by the time the new residents move in.

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